

The FLRA's Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Program

Federal sector labor-management relations has changed significantly in recent years. Greater emphasis is now placed on the use of alternative dispute resolution (ADR) and consensus decision-making in resolving workplace disputes and in improving labor-management relationships in the Federal sector. The FLRA's Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution (CADR) program enhances these efforts by integrating ADR into all of the case processes used by the various FLRA components. The CADR Office (CADRO) provides overall coordination and support to the FLRA components in implementing the CADR program.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR)?

ADR is an informal process that allows parties to discuss and develop their interests in order to resolve the underlying issues and problems in their relationship. The discussion is facilitated by a third party neutral who is there to ensure a productive dialogue.

What are the benefits of using ADR in Labor-Management Relationships?

ADR allows everyone to have an active part in the decision-making process. Solutions are adopted by consensus, and reflect an understanding of the interests of all parties. As a result, the solutions are tailored to the needs of the participants.

ADR encourages creative, innovative solutions, moving away from the traditional win/lose results of adversarial proceedings.

ADR resolves disputes while preserving relationships, and thereby helps create a productive working environment.

What types of services does the CADR program provide?

The services focus on alternatives to traditional case processing and formal dispute resolution. The CADR program assists the parties both in preventing disputes before they become cases and in coming up with ways to informally resolve disputes in pending cases. This includes interest-based conflict resolution and intervention services in pending [unfair labor practice cases](#), [representation cases](#), [negotiability appeals](#), and [impasse bargaining disputes](#).

The CADR program also provides facilitation, training and education to help labor and management develop collaborative relationships.

The ultimate goal is to provide parties with the skills they need to do ADR on their own.

Is the CADR program voluntary?

Yes.

Where does the CADR program fit in the normal case processing?

The [FLRA's Regulations](#) for negotiability, unfair labor practice, and representation cases ensure that parties have the opportunity to use ADR to resolve their cases. For example, in [negotiability](#) cases, during the post-petition conference, if the parties express interest in using ADR services, the case will be put on hold to give the parties time to get help from the CADR Office. In [unfair labor practice cases](#), an ADR process is available that allows the parties to

resolve the underlying dispute by facilitating a problem-solving approach, rather than having the Regional Office investigate the facts and determine the merits of the charge. For cases on their way to hearing, the [Administrative Law Judge \(ALJ\) settlement program](#) is available for one more attempt at informal resolution.

ADR services are also available in some circumstances for parties who do not have a case filed, but would like assistance with disputes or relationship issues.

Who provides CADR program services?

All of the FLRA components provide CADR program services.

The Office of the General Counsel (OGC) offers [ADR services](#) in unfair labor practice and representation cases, both before cases are filed and while they are pending. Through its [Regional Offices](#) and the [National Office](#), the OGC provides [facilitation, intervention, training and education services](#) to agencies and unions. Each Regional Office has a [Regional Dispute Resolution Specialist](#) who coordinates ADR services within the Region.

The [ALJ's office](#) has a settlement program for parties who have hearings pending before an ALJ. The [Federal Service Impasses Panel](#) uses ADR techniques in resolving bargaining impasses. Staff from the Authority Members' offices participate in interventions in negotiability and other cases, offering facilitation to help the parties resolve their differences before the case is ruled on by the Authority.

The CADR Office assists all FLRA components in the delivery of ADR services in cases and training sessions.

Examples of CADR Activity

Specific examples of recent CADR activity are contained in the [FLRA Bulletin](#), which is issued every four months.

How to Get More Information or Ask for Assistance or Training

For more information about the CADR program or for assistance or training requests, contact the CADR Office at CADRO@flra.gov or 202-482-6503 (phone) or 202-482-6574 (fax). The mailing address for the CADR Office is:

Federal Labor Relations Authority
Collaboration and Alternative Dispute Resolution Office
607 14th Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20424

You may also contact any of the [Regional Dispute Resolution Specialists in the Regional Offices](#), the [Office of General Counsel's National Office](#), the [Office of Administrative Law Judges](#), or the [Federal Service Impasses Panel](#).

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